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Message Text

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47
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07

LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 AF-08 ARA-06 EA-07 NEA-10 PRS-01

PA-01 USIA-06 SS-15 SP-02 NSC-05 /106 W
---------- 017955
R 271146Z AUG 76 CORRECTED COPY FOR MCN
FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0416
INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB
SUBJECT: US DELEGATION PROTESTS POLITICIZATION OF FIET

1. LEADERS OF U.S. DELEGATION TO EIGHTEENTH WORLD CONGRESS OF INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF COMMERCIAL, CLERICAL AND TECHNICAL EMPLOYEES (FIET) IN HELSINKI AUGUST 26 PROTESTED WHAT THEY VIEW AS CONFERENCE'S ANTI-AMERICAN POLITICAL BIAS BY DECLINING TO STAND FOR RE-ELECTION TO FIET POSTS, INCLUDING FIRST VICE PRESIDENT AND FOUR NORTH AMERICAN POSITIONS ON EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. IN ADDRESS ANNOUNCING POSITION, HEAD OF U.S. DELEGATION AND FIET FIRST VICE PRESIDENT JAMES HOUSEWRIGHT (RETAIL CLERKS) WARNED THAT USDEL "MUST HAVE TIME TO REASSESS OUR POSITION AND WHAT CONTRIBUTIONS WE CAN OR CANNOT MAKE TO THIS ORGANIZATION."

2. ISSUE AROSE OVER RESOLUTION CONDEMNING JUNTA IN CHILE WHICH USDEL INSISTED BE BALANCED WITH SPECIFIC CONDEMNATION OF TOTALITARIAN GOVERNMENTS IN OTHER AREAS INCLUDING
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BLOC COUNTRIES. AT AMERICANS' INSISTENCE, TONED-DOWN

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LANGUAGE CRITICIZING RESTRICTIONS ON FREEDOM "IN MANY
AREAS" WITH NO SPECIFIC COUNTRIES CITED HAD BEEN APPROVED
UNANIMOUSLY IN RESOLUTION COMMITTEE BUT MATTER
WAS RE-OPENED ON FLOOR OF CONGRESS AND CHAIRMAN (LORD
ALLEN) SENT RESOLUTION BACK TO COMMITTEE WHERE COMPROMISE
WAS SUCCESSFULLY DEFEATED. CONGRESS THEN APPROVED
RESOLUTION CONDEMNING ONLY CHILE.

3.

3. HOUSEWRIGHT TOLD CONGRESS HE FELT ITS RESOLUTION WAS
A "DELIBERATE EFFORT TO EMBARRASS THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE."
HE EMPHASIZED THAT HE IS ON RECORD AS STRONG SUPPORTER OF
AFL-CIO CONDEMNATION OF MILITARY GOVERNMENT IN CHILE BUT SAID
IT IS UNJUST OF FIET TO SINGLE OUT CHILE WHEN THERE ARE CASES
OF TOTALITARIANISM IN OTHER AREAS, INCLUDING "RED CHINA".
HE ALSO CRITICIZED OUTGOING PRESIDENT ALLEN FOR USING INCORRECT
PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE DELIBERATELY TO RESURRECT THE RESOLUTION.

4. IN PRIVATE CONVERSATION WITH LABATT, HOUSEWRIGHT
ACCUSED AUSTRIA'S HELMUT BRAUN OF BEHIND-THE-SCENES EFFORT
TO OVERTURN US COMPROMISE BY WHIPPING UP SENTIMENT AMONG
"PRO-COMMUNIST" DELEGATES. HE SAID USDEL HAD LONG BEEN
TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF BY PRO-COMMUNISTS AND THAT IT WAS TIME
TO PROTEST POLITICIZATION OF FIET BY THESE ELEMENTS. WHILE
NOT MAKING COMMUNIST CHARGE PUBLICLY, HE NOTED IN HIS
SPEECH THAT "THERE IS A DETERMINED EFFORT TO INFILTRATE
FREE TRADE UNION MOVEMENTS AND TO CAPTURE AND DESTROY
THEM."

5. HOUSEWRIGHT MADE CLEAR IN SPEECH THAT USDEL NOT
LEAVING THE CONGRESS OR FIET, ALTHOUGH LABATT GOT
IMPRESSION THAT SOME MEMBERS WERE READY TO DO BOTH.
US NOMINATIONS WILL REMAIN OPEN UNTIL SUCH TIME AS THE
AMERICANS HAVE COMPLETED ASSESSMENT OF THEIR POSITION.
HOUSEWRIGHT AND FELLOW AMERICAN UNION PRESIDENTS ALVIN
HEAPS (RWDSU) AND HOWARD COUGHLIN (OFFICE WORKERS)
INTEND CONSULT WITH MEMBERSHIPS AT HOME REGARDING FURTHER
PARTICIPATION IN FIET.

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6. PRESS WAS ABSENT FROM NOMINATION SESSION AND INITIAL
REACTION WAS CONFINED TO SWEDISH LANGUAGE HUFVUDSTADSBLADET
WHICH LED CONFERENCE WRAP-UP PIECE WITH FRONT-PAGE HEAD
"USA-PROTEST AT FIET MEETING." STORY OMITTED
HOUSEWRIGHT'S REFERENCE TO CHINA BUT OTHERWISE REPORTED
FULLY. FIET HAS RECEIVED GOOD PRESS COVERAGE. CHILE
RESOLUTION HAS BEEN ONLY POINT OF CONTROVERSY IN WEEK-LONG
CONGRESS, WHOSE THEME IS "FULL EMPLOYMENT, INCOME SECURITY,

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AND HUMANIZATION OF WORK."
AUSTAD

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Action: RELEASED
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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
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To: SECSTATE WASHDC COPENHAGEN OSLO REYKJAVIK STOCKHOLM VIENNA GENEVA
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